

What We Believe

God

There is only one God, and that God exists eternally as three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - each fully God yet each personally distinct from the other.

The Father

All people are created in God's image and, in a profoundly parental way, we matter deeply to Him. He created us each with purposes and futures that, if followed, would bring us delight and fulfillment. He also created the earth to be our physical home and a joyful place where He longs to have us walk in harmony with Him.

Sin & Forgiveness

Inevitably, though, all of us end up very quickly spiritually separated from our Creator, and, because of our chronic disloyalty, disobedience, and self-centeredness (aka Sin), we really do deserve the judgment of the Father we have betrayed. However, because of His incredible grace and love and the free-will self-sacrifice of His anointed Son, Jesus of Nazareth, God joyfully offers us the forgiveness that leads to salvation with earthly peace and purpose AND eternal life. God gives that 2-for-1 gift to anyone who can be honest enough to admit they need Him, humble enough to want to follow Him, and trusting enough to really believe in Him. Salvation cannot be earned through human effort or even huge personal goodness—but only by gratitude for a gift we could have never obtained on our own.

The Son

Jesus of Nazareth, God's anointed Messiah, was born of the Virgin Mary, taught about God's Kingdom, and lived a sinless human life. He fulfilled the Father's sacred need for justice by paying the price of our human sin, dying innocently on the cross—and being raised from the dead by God's power over death. Some day He will return to consummate history, fully redeem our fallen world, and fulfill the eternal plan of God.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our brokenness and distance from God, and draws us to Him and the salvation He offers. It makes its home within all believers and helps them grow spiritually mature, to lead Christ-like lives and use their spiritual gifts to build the church and serve to a lost, needy world.

The Church

The authentic paradigm of the church is a local congregation of believers who gather for worship, prayer, instruction, encouragement, mutual accountability, and community with each other. Through it, believers invest time, energy, and resources to fulfill the Jesus' Great

Commission — reaching lost people and growing them into fully devoted followers of Christ. All believers in Jesus Christ, honoring Him through the local church, are also members of the one true church universal. Christians in the church live out Jesus' call to spiritual unity by welcoming, respecting, and loving one another across racial, ethnic, gender, cultural, generational, socio-economic, denominational and national lines. Our lifestyle of obedience to Christ supersedes all earthly loyalties, churchly doctrines, and national patriotisms, and forces us out of our comfort zone as we give Christ-like honor even to people our society considers 'undeserving.'

The Bible

The canonical (approved in ancient times) Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, a.k.a. the Bible, are together God's unique revelation of His heart, law, and purposes to the people He created and redeemed. The Bible is the eternally true and inspired Word of God, and the supreme authoritative guide to all human life. No other writings, however helpful or inspirational, are vested with this ultimate divine authority. We teach from it humbly—aware of the possibility of our own error. We know that even among Christians, fervor is not the same as faithfulness; and in contrast to the popular human enterprise of critiquing the Scriptures, we long to be about God's enterprise of letting Scripture critique us, instead.

Free Will & Eternity

In order to make human life truly meaningful and to give human beings integrity of life and purpose, God chose to give us free will, by which He allows us to each make the decisions which impact our world and govern our individual futures. At the final judgment, God will honor us by respecting our life's decisions: Those who desired to live apart from God by rejecting His offer of reconciliation will find their desire for separateness and independence honored for all eternity as they dwell forever apart from God. Those who chose to accept the precious, self-sacrificing gift of a reconciling God-- Jesus Christ-- will receive the consummation of that gift—an undeserved eternity of closeness to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.